



By Kim Robinson

The SMMarT Guy

Do Sweat the Small Stuff

When people find out I train salespeople, they often ask me for *the* sales tip. They want the secret—the one big tip—that will help them sell more, sell better, sell faster.

I tell them that there is no magic bullet to selling. Instead, the secret to success in sales lies, for the most part, in simply paying attention to the small stuff.

Here's a recent example of how paying attention to the small stuff can make a big difference.

I needed to buy a new suit because my dress-for-work wardrobe shrank. Literally. All my suits still hang in my closet—I just can't fit into all of them anymore.

My wife was nice enough to point out that if I lost about 20 pounds (Gee honey, is *that* all?), I would gain a couple of nice suits without having to spend a dime. But, I decided the emotional price of diet and exercise was much higher than the cash price of buying new clothes, so I did what any real man would do and went shopping.

My first attempt occurred at a mall when I was out with my wife and teenage daughters (master shoppers all). I left them to their searches and went on my own to the men's department of a large department store. After some time in that department I finally found a salesman and asked him for help selecting a new suit.

It was Saturday and I was dressed in my favorite weekend attire of old jeans, a San Francisco Giants T-shirt, and my faded blue Crystal Clear Bottled Water hat. The men's clothing salesman was dressed in a wrinkled

shirt with no tie, and corduroy pants that were crudely scissored off at the shoe tops with pinking shears. Additionally, he did not engage me in conversation to qualify me as a buyer but, instead, misjudged my willingness to spend money by my casual attire so he took me to the cheap suits first. As I moved over to look at more expensive items, he told me alterations would be no problem. But I again noticed his outfit, and I wondered if he planned to pull out a pair of pinking shears and take care of my pants as he did his own.

I left the store without making a purchase and his sales commission left with me.

A couple of weeks later I realized (again) that losing weight to expand my wardrobe wasn't going to happen, so I again went shopping. This time I responded to a "going out of business after 55 years" radio advertisement and went to an old and venerable men's clothing store.

It was another Saturday, and as soon as I entered the store a salesman greeted me and comfortably asked how he could be of service. I told him my goal of a new suit and he steered me to suits in my (new) size as he continued to engage me in conversation. He ignored my casual attire and used our conversation to qualify me as a buyer. He was dressed appropriately for his job (impeccably), and he took me right to the top-end suits.

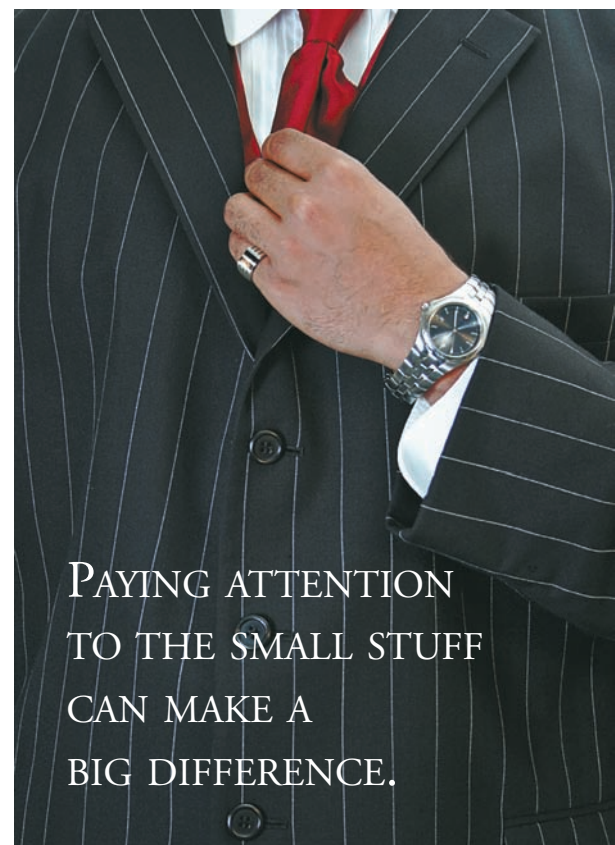
This salesman is a pro, because he pays attention to the small stuff. He dresses appropriately for his job, immediately greets and establishes a rapport with prospects, and does not prejudice anyone. He also starts

his sales process at the top, so that he can work down instead of starting at the bottom and working up. I intended to purchase one suit, but he helped me buy two. I'll bet he makes a very good living.

These are just some of the little things that make all the difference in sales. The first guy missed on all counts, sold me nothing, and earned nothing. The second man paid attention to the small stuff, sold me two suits, and earned a commission.

My new suits fit perfectly and I celebrated their purchase with some late-night ice cream. Why not, I had room to grow! ■

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